

Friendmakers

Books about good dogs for small children

by Andrew Bloomfield

Illustrated in water colours by Heidi Klaming



First published in 2021 by Caribou Imprints for
Bridges-Over-Barriers and
Friends of Andrew Bloomfield
16 Caribou Crescent
Guelph, Ontario, Canada, N1E 1C9

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Book 1: Everyday routines ISBN: 978-0-9866586-8-6

Book 2: Community meetings ISBN: 978-0-9866586-9-3

Book 3: The Great Adventure ISBN: 978-1-7776643-0-5

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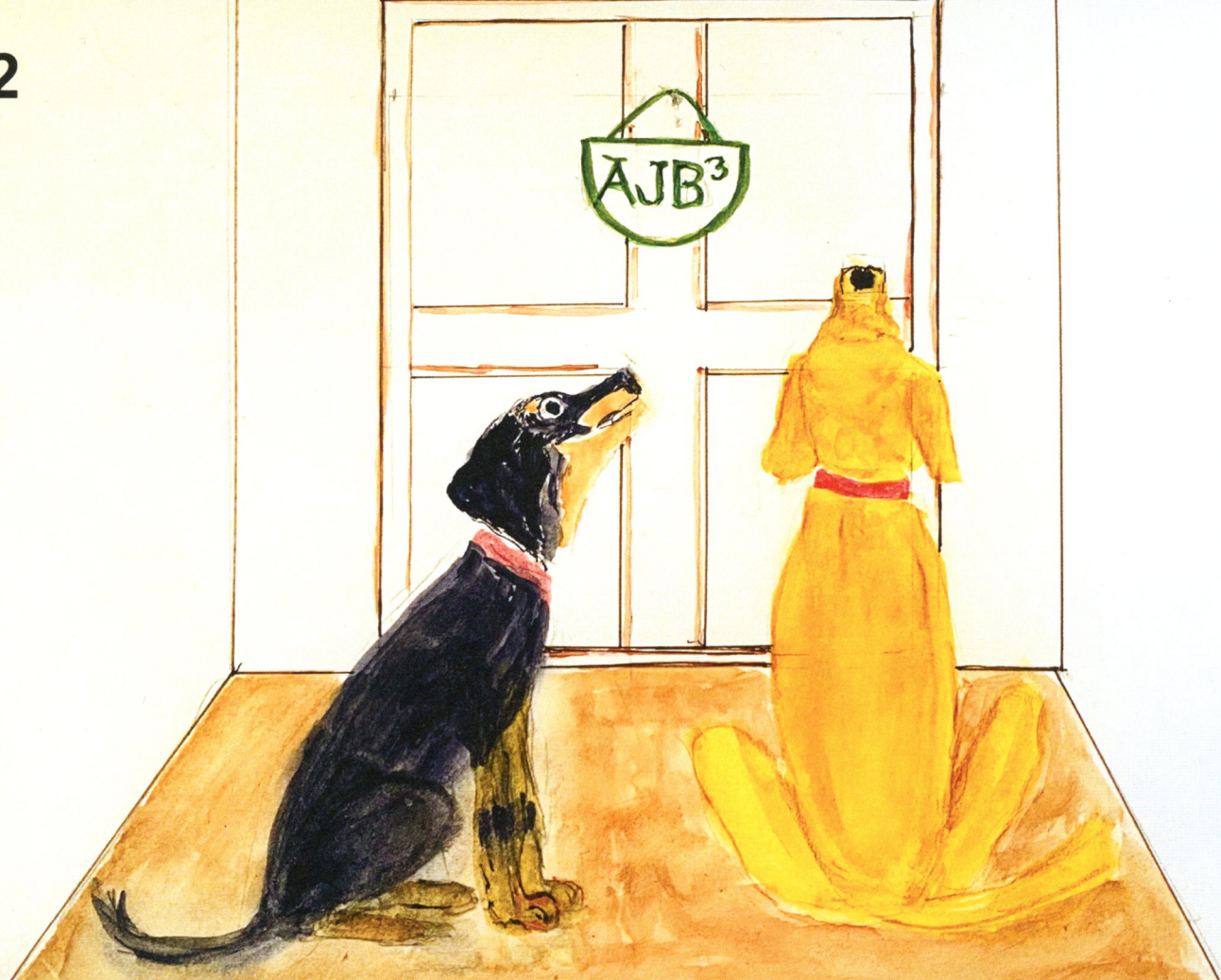
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About my new books by Andrew Bloomfield: see back cover.



“Hello, my name is Yukon. I am a Service Dog who is trained to work with my master Andrew.”

“Hello, I’m Summit and also specially trained and learning how to support my new master.”



Yukon: "It is time to get up, Andrew. Watch and observe, Summit: this is how I wake up Andrew."

Summit: "Thank you, Yukon. I am eager to learn Andrew's routines."

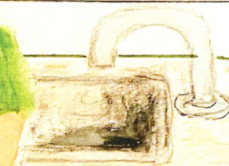
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Yukon: "After we wake him he goes to the kitchen and gets our food ready, so we have energy to work today."

Summit: "That makes me happy and joyful."

Yukon: "Yes he does this every morning. He also gives us more food at night time, so we do not sleep with empty stomachs."

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Yukon: "After breakfast he lets us out in the backyard to get some fresh air."

Summit: "I love being outside in the fresh air and I get to explore around."

Yukon: "It is wonderful, but any minute he will open the door to let us inside to follow him to his next routine. I love being outside too but I also love being with my master."

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Yukon: "This is Andrew's studio. He works here with his good friend Heidi who is a wonderful artist. They create art together and sometimes include us in paintings."

Summit: "I see Andrew is painting another picture that looks like us. What is it for? Maybe an art show or a new book idea."

Yukon: "He does beautiful work. I'm proud of him."



Summit: "What is happening? Are we going out?"

Yukon: "Yes Summit, we are going out to make the garden look nice. This is where Andrew grows his vegetables and flowers."

Summit: "Why do we have to wear this funny leash?"

Yukon: "It is called a double leash. It connects both of us, so Andrew knows where we are."

Summit: "I like this. I get to be outside and I get to be around Andrew. It is the best of both worlds."



Andrew is copy-typing with gentle music playing.

Yukon: "We can relax now into a nap. I like to dream of running in a big green field."

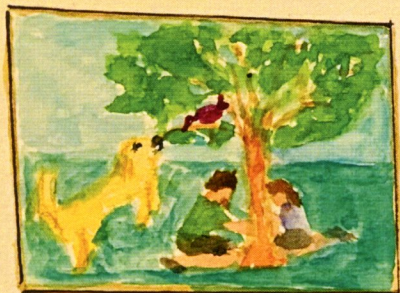
Summit: "I hear Andrew type our names. Is he all right? Does he need us?"

Yukon: "Relax, everything is just fine."



Yukon: "We help Andrew when he is unwell in body and mood. We can stay quietly and still with him for several hours and he can sleep and feel better. I bark to alert people and lick Andrew to show my love and concern. He says we give hugs with our eyes."

Summit: "I do not bark or lick. But I am very good at snuggling up close to Andrew's body or lying over his legs and feet, like a living weighted blanket. I stabilize him. I am his anchor."



Andrew in bed, relaxed after a long soak in his bath:

“Thank you, my best furry friends. I need you both as my anchors, to ground, support and encourage me. I need you for my heart as I love you. You give me the stability I need to keep my mind and body focused. Like supported typing gives me that for communication.”

Yukon: “This is the best place to be.”

Summit: “We are here to do a job, but we want to be here for each other and for you. Now we are all family.”

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Book 2: Community Meetings

by Andrew Bloomfield

Illustrated in water colours by Heidi Klaming



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When the front door buzzer sounds, both dogs run to the door. Yukon barks and Summit wags his tail:

Yukon: "Someone is here; we must tell Andrew."

Summit: "The guests arrive and we sit and wait for Andrew to open the door. Then we give them a smile and a wag of our tails and rub against them to say 'Welcome, you are at Andrew's home. We are his friendmakers. Please come in.'"



Yukon: "This is our favourite activity--- going for a walk in Andrew's neighbourhood."

Summit: "Great. Andrew has to put on our leashes and jackets. I am connected by the leash which has a clicker so Andrew can tell me to slow or stop. I need to pay attention. I love to meet people but know I must attend most of all to my master."



Summit: "I love the fun of playing with other dogs."

Yukon: "We have to be careful if we meet dogs on the loose. They get excited if we keep moving. They may bark and want to tackle us."

Summit: "I know that dogs, squirrels, birds or people coming close and making noises may startle Andrew, so he might drop the leash."



A lone dog, quite large and off leash, seems interested in approaching Andrew and the dogs.

Yukon: "We can play with dogs we know. But strange dogs, off leash, may run up to us and bark. It's best to support Andrew to stand still, hold tight, and wait till the dog has moved away."

Summit: "I hope that the master of this dog soon arrives."



Summit: "I like our walks. Meeting new people is fun. I always want to say hello. I love making little children happy."

Yukon: "But remember first: Stop, sit and wait. Wait for Andrew to say it is okay."

Summit: "Children should not scream or yell and run up to us. I do not like that and neither does Andrew. Yukon and I are Andrew's friendmakers."



Summit: "That child looks scared of us."

Yukon: "Some little kids need help to understand that we are trained to be quiet and calm and will not go near them till they are ready. Andrew will hold our leash firmly and we will sit quietly."

Summit: "I see that our friend is explaining to the child that we are well trained and will wait to meet the child until she is ready."



Yukon: "We dream of helping little children to feel comfortable and happy around good dogs. We can make that happen when we are allowed to touch and be close again. We can sit very calmly in Andrew's garden as they approach us."

Summit: "They can pat our heads and we can snuggle up to them and wag our tails."



Summit: "Look at those big horses. They have four legs just like us. They look like they are playful and full of energy. Do they like playing with dogs?"

Yukon: "Perhaps sometimes. But not all horses are the same, just like humans and dogs. I think they feel how sensitive Andrew is, so they are calm and relaxed around him."

Summit: "I have been trained not to bark or move quickly around the horses as it could spook them."



Summit and Andrew go for a Public Access Test at the University. They have to steer a course through garbage litter, other dogs, people and squirrels.

Summit tells Yukon afterwards: "It was very hard to stay focused but I did it. I listen to our master and I'm learning how to feel his trusting pull. I stayed on track and didn't let myself look at any distractions. Thank you, Yukon for teaching me the tricks of the trade. The test was fun and also good practice."

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Book 3: The Great Adventure

by Andrew Bloomfield

Illustrated in water colours by Heidi Klaming





Yukon: "Andrew was tired and forgot he had not let us inside before he went for his nap."

Summit: "The gate is open. We can go for a run. Let's have some fun. It's the perfect time while Andrew rests. We can be back before anyone notices."

Yukon: "Just this once and we must be careful. Follow me and when it's time to return we go. It's a deal!"



Summit: "I know this is naughty. But it is fun for once."

Yukon: "Enjoy it this once. I remember the urge to escape and explore. But I feel responsible for you. Please follow our safety rules."



At a side street, Summit immediately sits down to wait till it is safe to cross. Yukon, panting, sits beside him and they both watch the traffic.

Yukon: "That was very good, Summit. You are so good at this, and when we are on our own too!"

Summit: "Thank you Yukon. I love to be praised for doing the right thing. Andrew has trained us well."



Yukon and Summit cross the footbridge to the park and run down to the riverbank disturbing the geese who rise up in a cloud. Yukon and Summit roll in the grass, laughing out loud.

Summit: "I enjoy rolling in the grass. It eases the tickly feeling in my hairy coat."

Yukon: "The grass feels nice when the sun is shining on it."



Yukon and Summit meet two other dogs. One is large and brown, the other is small and white. As Yukon and Summit are not wearing their official service dog vests, the other dogs do not know they should stay at a distance. The dogs frolic together. Then the other dogs' owners call them to come.

Summit: "That was fun!"

Yukon: "Yes, they were good dogs, though none of us should be off leash."



After all the excitement and because it is a warm day.....

Summit: "I love to swim, Yukon! It feels cool and refreshing. Look at me!" Summit jumps in the water and is soaking wet. He shakes and sprays the water all over Yukon.

Yukon: Laughing and shaking his head. "I am not a fan of swimming. I do not like the feeling of my fur being soaked. But I can see you like it a lot. So does our master."



Two neighbours who know Andrew and his dogs greet the dogs and suggest they should go home.

Yukon: "Summit, our neighbours say we have been missed. We must return to Andrew right now. How will he not notice this?"

Summit: "Let's go back and sneak in the side gate."



When Yukon and Summit return, they see the gate is closed. Andrew is waiting outside on the garden bench.

Summit asks Yukon: "Should we go to Andrew and try to explain with our eyes?"

Yukon: "I think he knows. We are soaking wet and we are outside."



Andrew: "I am happy to see you. I understand you wanted to go on an adventure. It was spontaneous. I feel like that every day. What did you learn?"

Yukon: "We know that we will go outside for a walk with you again. We do not need to run away. We can see that you are glad to have us return. Every morning you know we will be there for you."

Summit: "We just have those dreams of freedom and fun. But we are very glad to get home to Andrew who needs us."

ABOUT MY NEW BOOKS by Andrew Bloomfield

In December 2019 I planned a new book for small children and their families and friends who may read it with them. This new idea came to me in a dream one night. Writing this book was one of my goals for the year 2020. The plan has grown into three linked books. Last time I had a big book project, composing my life story in 2011, I was very well and upbeat for the nine months I worked on it. I hoped that this project would keep me happy and focused for all of 2020 and even longer.

For the past 35 years I have been blessed to have companion dogs to give me emotional and practical support. I cannot speak and have some health problems. But I have a wonderful life with many blessings and my dogs are a big part of that. In 2021 I have two trained service dogs. Yukon will be 14 and Summit 5 this year. Yukon is now a senior dog, like a person in his 80s. Though he is retired, he still works. Summit is like a young man in his late 20s who has learned the ways of his home and life from his mentor Yukon.

I have noticed when we walk around my neighbourhood and in the riverside parklands, small children call out that they want to pet my dogs. Their parents and companions usually tell them quickly that my dogs are on duty and should not be distracted. Some small kids may be scared of big dogs.

I remember being terrified of black dogs that barked when I was a small boy. I want to help children understand how dogs can be wonderful supporters for people of all ages. We may think of ways children can actually meet my dogs.

As this book is for small children, it is told in small words, but sometimes I may use an important big word. It is meant to be a fun book with lots of water-colour illustrations by my art mentor Heidi Klaming.

I always prefer true stories that are real. But I am trying to appreciate fiction and make-believe, so my book may include some imaginative situations. Most of the book is told in the voices or from the points of view of my dogs. Not everything in the book may actually have happened. But the story line matches the personalities of my dogs. The lessons we have learned are true.

My dogs Summit, Yukon and Amy were chosen and trained for me by National Service Dogs (NSD) of Cambridge Ontario. Each year, my current dog and I get tested on our skills to work together safely in public places. I want to assure NSD that the dramatic story in Book 3 did not really happen with their dogs. But they are situations that the dogs might have dreamed of and that match their personalities.